

This Week in Congress

August 2, 2010

Dear Friend,

Welcome to "This Week in Congress." This week's headlines are:

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U.S. District Judge Blocks Arizona Immigration Law

Arizona has been overrun with illegal immigration, and violent crime and kidnappings have harmed many residents. Earlier this year, Arizona passed a law to address these circumstances and protect Arizonans, but this week a U.S. District Judge blocked several provisions of the law from taking effect. I am extremely disappointed in Judge Bolton's ruling. Arizona is only trying to enforce our nation's laws—something the federal government has failed to do when it comes to immigration.

As a strong supporter of the Arizona immigration law, I have introduced legislation, H.R. 5774, to discourage federal lawsuits like the suit against Arizona. The Respect for Local Laws Act will require the U.S. Department of Justice to pay for any legal costs incurred by a state or local government when a court upholds a state or local immigration law. I have also signed two legal briefs in defense of Arizona's efforts to enforce federal immigration law. Lawsuits against states like Arizona do nothing to stop illegal immigration. Rather than spending money on a lawsuit, the Obama Administration should have used those resources to secure the border. [Click](#)

[here](#) to visit my website and cast your vote on the Arizona immigration law.

[Click here](#) to watch a speech I gave on the Arizona immigration law.

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Protecting Our Veterans' Second Amendment Rights

Many Kansans would be shocked to learn that a U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs process is arbitrarily stripping the Second Amendment rights of veterans and their families who simply receive assistance for managing their financial affairs. Over the past 10 years, the VA has sent the names of more than 100,000 veterans, their spouses, and their children to the FBI to prevent them from owning firearms - not because they pose a danger, but simply because they could not handle their VA benefits. It is wrong to take away veterans' constitutional right to keep and bear arms simply because they cannot manage their finances.

This week, I offered an amendment to a VA spending bill that would have reformed this practice that wrongly denies gun ownership rights to veterans. Despite the support for this change by a number of veterans' organizations like the American Legion, as well as the National Rifle Association and Gun Owners of America, I am disappointed that Congressional leaders did not allow my amendment to be considered. The amendment would have required that - before the VA can forward the veteran's name to the FBI - an appropriate judicial authority must rule that the veteran poses a danger and should not own a firearm.

In 2009, I introduced similar legislation, H.R. 2547, to correct this wrong and restore gun rights for our country's veterans. [Click here](#) to learn more about H.R. 2547, the Veterans Second Amendment Protection Act. [Click here](#) to watch a video of my comments to the House of Representatives this week.

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Preventing Taxpayer Dollars from Funding Abortions

Using taxpayer dollars to fund abortions is a clear violation of many Kansans' deeply held beliefs in the sanctity of human life. It is an abuse I strongly oppose and have fought hard to prevent. Earlier this year, President Obama signed health care reform legislation into law that lacked critical safeguards to prevent federal taxpayer funding of abortions. This week, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services issued regulations to ban federal funding of abortions for one new government program created by the new health care law. Unfortunately, these safeguards do not extend to all government programs.

To fully ensure federal dollars are never used to pay for abortions, I am a sponsor of the Protect Life Act, H.R. 5111. This bill amends the new health care law to prevent federal funding for

abortion or abortion coverage through government exchanges, community health centers, or any other program funded or created by the new health care law. This bill would extend longstanding federal policy and would protect the lives of the unborn. [Click here](#) to learn more about my record of support for defending life.

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Time to Implement Iran Sanctions is Running Out

On July 1, President Obama signed into law the Comprehensive Iran Sanctions, Accountability, and Divestment Act. I supported this legislation because it contained strong energy and financial sanctions to pressure Iran to abandon its pursuit of a nuclear weapon. Yet, the sanctions are only useful if they are implemented. The Comprehensive Iran Sanctions, Accountability, and Divestment Act gives the President 90 days to begin implementing the sanctions. This week, I joined several of my colleagues in requesting an update from the President on his progress in implementing these sanctions. I want to be sure the President understands the urgency of this issue and enforces these sanctions so that Iran cannot acquire nuclear weapons capability. [Click here](#) to watch my comments about the importance of implementing sanctions against Iran.

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Honoring Veterans at Seneca's Vietnam War Memorial Traveling Wall Exhibit

On Friday evening, I participated in the opening ceremony of the Vietnam War Memorial Traveling Wall in Seneca. I thanked many local veterans for their service and for securing the freedoms we now enjoy. I commended the community, especially Elmer Holthaus and the members of the American Legion Post 21, for bringing the traveling wall to Nemaha County so that local veterans, who may not be able to travel to Washington, could see and experience the Memorial. This exhibit gave us all an opportunity to pay tribute to the heroes who fought in the Vietnam War, and to honor the friends and loved ones who gave all in the war.

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Visiting with Kansans at County Fairs in Garden City and Colby

On Saturday, I stopped by the Finney County Fair in Garden City and the Thomas County Fair in Colby to visit with local residents and longtime friends. Both fairs had activities for the entire family to enjoy – cowboy Olympics, a kids pedal pull competition, rodeos, car races, livestock sales, a demolition derby, barbecues and 4-H exhibits. County fairs bring families together and are a great way to highlight our Kansas communities. Thanks to all the volunteers and staff for their hard work to ensure both fairs were great successes.

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Supporting Good Work of Catholic Charities at Kansas Prairie Celebration

On Sunday, I attended the Kansas Prairie Celebration in Salina, an event held to raise funds for Catholic Charities. Last year, Catholic Charities served more than 9 million people nationwide through a variety of services, such as adoption and crisis pregnancy counseling, senior services and family and youth programs. I believe that individuals who volunteer their time in churches, neighborhoods and communities can often have the greatest impact and change lives for the better. Thanks to organizations like Catholic Charities and many others, who daily answer the call to serve their neighbors in need.

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IRS Rules Affect Kansas Non-Profits

In 2006, the Pension Protection Act was signed into law. This legislation enacted changes to tax law provisions which affect tax-exempt organizations. Beginning in 2008, tax-exempt organizations with receipts of \$25,000 or less were required to submit an annual notice to the IRS listing donations. Recognizing that a number of non-profits have been slow to comply with the new requirements, the IRS is offering organizations until October to complete the paperwork. This new requirement affects up to 3,700 Kansas non-profits. For more information about the new requirements, [click here](#) .

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In the Office

Barton Goering of Spring Hill was in this week with the Spring Hill School District to discuss ways to improve education in Kansas. Lorna Moore, Emily Hurst and Amanda Stephensen of Hutchinson were in with Corporation for Enterprise Development to discuss affordable housing programs for low-income Kansans. Jerry Simer of Overland Park was in with Best Buy to discuss our nation's tax code and credit card rules contained in the recently passed financial regulation legislation.

Andrew Stasburg of Fredonia and Kassie Curran of Girard were in with Kansas' Future Farmers of America to visit and learn more about my duties as a Member of Congress. Robert and Linda German of Salina were in with the Humane Society to discuss current legislation regarding animal welfare issues. Greg Schoofs of Overland Park was in with Midwest Air Traffic Control Services to discuss the FAA reauthorization and air traffic control services.

Clare Gustin of Hays was in with the Sunflower Electric Corporation to discuss efforts to build a coal fired plant in Holcomb. Sharon Klose of Leawood and Tim Knoles of Independence were in with the Kansas National Education Association to share their thoughts on education legislation before Congress.

Several Kansans were in this week for a tour of the U.S. Capitol Building, including David and Kim Zervas of Manhattan; Joshua Schulte of Victoria; Barry, Janeil, Brock and Jordan Baxter of Smith Center; Kyle, Barb, Bailey, Brooke, Kenzie, Kade, and Kolt Hemmert of Oakley; Erica, Faith, and Frankie Ortiz of Andover; Katie, LeAnn, and Jonathan Stanger of Wichita; Lynette Stanger of Abilene; Chance and Shannon Williams of Salina; Cameron, Jeanne, Connor and Hayden Peirce of Hutchinson; and Jerry Hinerman of Hillsboro.

Also stopping by the office were Helen Norris of Wellington, Roger and Ruth Roe of Osage, Gregory and Aileen Roe of Olathe, Mary Ellen Posson of Norton and Rob Johnson of Mission.

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Contact Me

It is an honor to serve you in Washington, D.C. Please let me know how I can be of assistance. To send me an email, [click here](#). You can also [click here](#) to contact me through one of my Kansas offices or my Washington, D.C., office.

Very truly yours,

Jerry